

HCS HBs 578, 574, & 584 -- CIVICS EDUCATION (Swan)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Standing Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education

This bill repeals the provisions requiring every high school student in any public or private school except private trade schools to satisfactorily pass an examination on the provisions and principles of the United States Constitution and the Missouri Constitution and in American history and American institutions in order to receive a certificate of graduation. The bill establishes the Missouri Civics Education Initiative that requires any student entering ninth grade after July 1, 2016, who is attending any public, charter, or private school except private trade schools or a student seeking to complete a high school equivalency certificate to, as a condition of high school graduation or its equivalent, take and receive a passing grade on a basic civics test similar to the civics portion of the United States Naturalization test, produced by the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).

The test must use the same 100 questions used by the USCIS that are administered to applicants for United States citizenship. In order to receive a passing score on the test, the student must answer at least 60 of the questions correctly. Any student may take the test as many times as necessary for passage, but must receive a passing score prior to receiving a high school diploma, a certificate of high school graduation, or a high school equivalency certificate. Every public, charter, or private school except private trade schools and the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education must certify that a student has taken and received a passing grade on the test.